



AAC Publications

Fall on Rock – Free-Solo Climbing

Colorado, Boulder, Gregory Flatironette

On September 27, two hikers found the body of Angus Moloney (22) near the trail at the base of a rock formation called the Gregory Flatironette (a.k.a. the Fifth Pinnacle) in Boulder's Open Space and Mountain Parks. Moloney, originally from New York State, apparently had fallen the day before while free-soloing the formation.

According to Boulder County sheriff's deputies, Moloney had told a friend that he was going to climb and would be back in the evening. He was reported missing the next morning, and a search was just beginning when he was found by the hikers. Moloney fell approximately 100 feet, according to the deputies. Officials and family members said Moloney was an experienced rock climber. (Source: Boulder County Sheriff's Office.)

Analysis

The Gregory Flatironette routes are less popular than climbs on many other formations in the Flatirons and are known to be lichen-covered and potentially loose. Finding the path of least resistance is difficult as well, increasing the probability of wandering onto more challenging terrain. Once on top of the Flatiron formations, an easy downclimb isn't always obvious. When choosing to free-solo any route, it's essential to be very familiar with the climb and its attendant dangers. (Source: The Editors.)

Images

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